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Notes of the Week

1933. Add the outside units and they make four; add the middle units and they make twelve, which is three times four; the whole number makes sixteen and the nine is divisible by the threes; it is indeed also three times three.

There must be something in all this, of good augury or ill, or there may—it is barely conceivable—be nothing in all this. At all events we may leave the portentous significance of the date to the mongers of omens and those who find prophecies in figures, hoping always that they may find hopeful and agreeable meanings for the rest of us. They generally do.

**

At all events let us regard the New Year with favour while it is new. It will be time enough for cursing and lamentation when the freshness of its bloom is tarnished. There may be no logical reason for regarding January 1 as a turning point. Any arbitrary choice of day in all the year would serve as well. But it is a convention and it is convenient. It manufactures a season for pulling up our socks, dragging our minds out of their ruts, and looking backwards

with a little satisfaction, forwards with fortitude if not with confidence.

**

We have not done well in the past year and the rest of the civilised world has perhaps done less well.

Backwards
and
Forwards

But we might have been in much worse case. We are not yet ruined or bankrupt. We have been at peace within ourselves. The predicted war is still a prediction. Chaos and revolution are still catchwords. The National Government has not been broken up by Sir Herbert Samuel's defection. Ottawa was not a complete fiasco. Ireland is not yet wading in blood. India has faded out of the headlines in newspapers. Moscow is certainly not more potent in mischief; the Five Years' Plan is still only a plan. Christianity retains its lip service and—outside, even inside, Moscow—God is not mocked.

There is a damnable row to hoe ahead of us. Unemployment is not lessened; the Debt is still claimed while reparations are gone; the Budget looks terrifying and new economies are merely a subject for speculation; leadership is not yet the nation's strong point. In fact we are still drifting and Niagara still roars ahead of us. But here we are and if a lot of the stuffing has been knocked out of us, no one shall say that none is left. So here's to 1933. It can, of course, be worse than 1932. But, candidly, that does not seem probable.

Where the pundits of "City columns" are puzzled, how can the layman pick his way in the South African gold tangle? If we say that the gold standard is gone from South Africa, however equivocal the words and deeds of the Hertzog Government, that a frank approach to a sterling basis is the obviously sensible course, that "going off gold" will be a god-send to the South African farmer and producer and no handicap to any other part of the Empire, we have gone as far as any ordinary understanding of the situation. Those who deal in exchanges or hold shares in gold-mining companies, producing or, at present, non-producing, must worry out the rest.

The Gold Cure

* *

The politics of the affair are really more interesting, and here we see General Smuts and Mr. Tielman Roos jockeying for position like two yachts waiting to cross the line or riders at the starting gate. A coalition seems inevitable; the immediate leadership of less importance. And, under the cloth of gold there stirs the old issue of racialism, for which the Dominion of South Africa has been paying its price ever since Joe Chamberlain's triumph in the Peace of Vereeniging. If this can be abated to any large extent under a new and amalgamated dispensation, the gold standard may be left to flap idly in the winds of the world. South Africa has problems and to spare which only a white race in unity can solve with safety.

Under the Cloth

* *

The ex-Kaiser's son-in-law, who is the Duke of Brunswick, is determined, according to the Almanach de Gotha of 1933, to maintain a claim to the Dukedom of Cumberland, a title removed from the British Roll of Peers by an Order in Council in 1919. He will, it is stated in that authoritative work, be styled "Royal Prince of Great Britain and Ireland, Duke of Cumberland, Duke of Brunswick and Lüneburg." The thought that so definitely German a nobleman puts a non-existent British above a genuine German title should bring comfort to the souls of those in doubt as to the value set upon British goods in Continental markets.

Buy British!

* *

Then, we know in a general way what may be expected. But when three Greeks meet together, two of them arguing before the third, a pretty pother may be expected. And has taken place. The fury of Mr. Courtney, Attorney of Illinois, which State sued at Athens for the

When Greek Meets Greek

extradition of Cockney-born Mr. Samuel Insull, wanted on charges of fraud in a city famed for its child-like honesty (Chicago), at seeing his prey escape him, is easily intelligible. He even threatens action "through diplomatic channels." As patriotic Englishmen we of course deplore the fact that one, at least born among us, should escape repaying something to America. We sympathise with Mr. Courtney, for we much fear that Mr. Insull is insulated. And the State Attorney may reflect on a new version of the line that begins "Timeo Danaos."

* *

A blacksmith in Devonshire is looking for two apprentices. That seems strange in these days of highly developed mechanisation, mass production and the like, but it has a cheering sound none the less. It means that the skilled craftsman can still find work for his well-trained hands to do, that not all the old "personal" industries have been crushed out of existence. And what a jolly village picture it conjures up of the farmer's horses being led to the smithy, the flying sparks, the red-hot metal, the leather-aproned figure of "the mighty man" himself. Let those who will prate of non-economic methods and all the rest of it. We hope the two apprentices will "go to it" and make worthy practitioners of a fine old calling.

* *

The policies of the Harding, Coolidge and Hoover administrations, inspired by the selfish and unco-operative attitude which the Republican party adopted because of their implacable hatred of Woodrow Wilson, must be held in large measure responsible for the continuation of the war psychology, the frustration of all attempts at thorough-going economic rehabilitation through international action, and the sense of insecurity now prevailing in every quarter of the world.

* Fons et Origo

It is easy to imagine the storm of reprobation that would have burst on our heads, had the above paragraph appeared unsigned in these columns. For having said and written much less we have been taken to task by various American friends at times during the past six months. Yet to anyone possessed of common sense the truth contained in the above statement must be obvious. We need not blush to say so, for the statement is that, not of the *Saturday Review*, but of Colonel Edward M. House, former member of the American Peace Commission, and in all probability chief adviser on foreign policy to Mr. Franklin Roosevelt, President-elect of the United States.

* (See the *Saturday Review* Dec. 17).

Every one of the nine pages that Colonel House contributes under the title of "Some Foreign Problems of the Next Administration," to the January issue of the American quarterly "Foreign Affairs" contains matter of surpassing, and often surprising, interest to the European leader. Perhaps it is wrong to feel surprise, but we have grown so accustomed to the Coolidge-Hoover type of policy and handling of diplomacy as almost to forget that anything else can come out of America. Let us then hear Colonel House who sends us fresh and sorely needed hope. Last week brought us President Hoover's Christmas box. May this prove the New Year's gift from President Roosevelt! If it should indeed prove so, there is no reason to wonder at his predecessor having left Washington in dudgeon to fish in Florida.

**

"Because of our happy geographical position," writes Colonel House, "and vast natural resources we long felt immune from the rules which other nations found it useful to observe in international intercourse." Could any critic be severer? "A new deal," this authoritative witness emphasises more than once, "in the spirit of our foreign policy is all-important." On the question of tariffs he is definite and unanswerable. The war turned the U.S. from a debtor into a creditor nation; therefore the American policy of prohibitive tariffs was fatal, as making it impossible for European countries to pay their debts, and payment for a time was only feasible through "a thoroughly unsound financial development." As Colonel House pithily puts it, "We would not let foreigners earn the dollars to pay us their debts; but we cheerfully lent them the dollars to pay us the interest."

**

The vicious circle must be broken. "The United States should lead the way," and Colonel House indicates that Mr. Franklin Roosevelt is the man to do it. "A protective tariff, but not a prohibitive tariff" is what, like a practical man, he advises. Like a practical man, too, he advises making an end of the debt question, and making a quick end, for "Uncertainty is one of the factors delaying the return of normal economic conditions." Colonel House does not use the word "cancellation," but he comes so near it that, while praising the Lausanne settlement, he says in the same breath: "In the same way and for similar reasons, the American people must be ready—as practical, business men, for reasons of cold, common sense—to do what is necessary in order to dispose finally of the war debts as a political question." What else is the British case?

Finally Colonel House has a weighty word to say on the matter of disarmament. It is one that has frequently been said in various forms in these columns. "The great problem of government is how to re-establish a sense of security in the world. If we are sincere in preaching disarmament, we must help to give nations cause to feel that their lands and possessions are safe. Disarmament follows security. It cannot be achieved under any other circumstances."

**

However keen the critical regard with which any of us may watch the B.B.C. there can be no complaint of the absence of a thrill in the Christmas day programme. The broadcast by the King to all his people throughout the Empire was a notable achievement, even if His Majesty's voice sounded what a dear old lady described as "a little bronical." Even more astounding, if in a personal sense less thrilling, was the tour of reception round the Empire which went before it. Those strange, unearthly unrealities of time and space which we accept without clear thought were brought sharply to the duldest senses. And we all realised that the age of modern miracles is only just beginning. An almost savagely sudden realisation.

**

Just before Christmas Mr. R. B. Bennett sailed back to Canada with his pocket stuffed with the urgently required ruling of our customs that only Dominion wheat directly consigned to English ports should be exempt from the Ottawa import dues. In return Mr. Bennett may be expected to have given guarantees in our favour in respect of his new Canadian Tariff Board: Yorkshire and Lancashire need all the impartiality Mr. Bennett can secure in hearing their case for tariff reductions over there. What may yet agitate Liverpool wheat buyers and the Baltic Exchange is that the usual charter of shippers to ship-owners contains what is known as the alternative-port clause. In other words wheat is shipped ex-Halifax to Liverpool or Brest, and, according as European markets vary, while in mid-ocean, the cargo may be diverted to France. It is to discourage this that Mr. Bennett came here with successful results. Otherwise the Preference is nullified.

**

The dramatic walk-out from the Devizes R.D.C. of Mr. Mark Fennell, a councillor, when that body with less than half of its members present voting decided to drop the wage-cut of its staff in 1933, may reverberate far beyond the borders of Wilts. Mr. Fennell, a champion of the insecure payers-in of rates rather than a special pleader of

New American Policy

Arma Virque

Miracle and Magic

Tact and Tariffs

Hard Bargaining

A Practical Lead

Too Costly Altruism

the well-secured payers-out on the public purse, in vain reminded his brethren that skilled agricultural workers at 30s. a week were paying the 40s. a week wages of the Council employees. But local authorities still seem to think we are Americans—full of English gold.

* *

In the British Museum

Death walks round on Wednesdays and Saturdays.
He loves to do the thing with ceremony.
He leaves a broken umbrella in custody,
He asks the way of a person in uniform
And shocks him by floating away invisible;
Then potters round cases, making grimaces,
Tasting his triumph over the centuries.

Sometimes Death, if weary of solitude,
Calls up Time. Then, breathing huskily,
Both totter round the miles of galleries,
Nod to old friends like Buddha and Socrates,
Smile at the gewgaws of Solomon Islanders,
Talk a rum jargon with Xerxes and Sargon,
Tasting the flavour of exquisite centuries.

Death is soon bored with Time's reminiscences.
The garrulous flood rolls on with monotony,
How Egypt pyramids, Babylon palaces,
Strove to defy him, how sunburnt savages
First made canoes and sharks made a snap at them.
Time grows young again, Time finds tongue again,
Tasting the air of hopeful young centuries.

Death leaves him babbling, and mutters: "No matter:

They died. In their pride, in their fear, in their ecstasy,

They were mine. In the end their myriad weaknesses

Bowed to my strength, and all that is left of them
Sleeps under glass in these futile galleries,
While I grow stronger, as Time grows longer,
Tasting my triumph over the centuries."

H. S. V. H.

* *

The strange vagaries of the human mind and the odd varieties of its sensibilities have been illustrated by the death of a man on whom neurasthenia had preyed ever since a bomb in a war-time Zeppelin raid fell on his house—

Delayed Action

without injuring him. Air-raids were hellish things to a civilian population compelled to endure them helplessly; they were a glorified form of sport to anti-aircraft gunners who could try to hit back. But some of that difference may have been due to the greater security from physical danger of the gunners—at whom the haphazard bombing of the last war was often directly aimed!

Apart from that there were the people who rushed out to seek the spectacle of an air raid and the people who rushed blindly for cover; the

soldiers who regarded shells or machine gun fire with accustomed calm and yet were driven near panic by the dropping of bombs. As for shock or shell-shock, which presumably decreed the end of our unlucky subject, that is a mental state which, in spite of so much tragic experience, is still understood most imperfectly.

* *

Once again Foot and Mouth Disease has put in its unwelcome appearance, and controversy will start again as to whether the policy of treating the disease usually followed on the Continent or that of slaughter imposed in Great Britain

Foot and Mouth

is the more satisfactory. The disease can admittedly be cured, but its effects are so damaging to the animal that in this country curative treatment is regarded as not worth while. The germ which belongs to the filter-passing order has been long pursued by the experts of the Royal Veterinary College, and its capture and identification should make preventing measures possible. As it is the disease which is carried with such disastrous ease by boots and motor tyres as well as animals is responsible for widespread loss to our farmers, and, even in these days of economy, the State should show wise generosity in the financing of the experiments destined to suppress it.

* *

What is wrong with our prisons, with the system under which they are run, or with the methods of administration of the establishments themselves? Quite obviously something or somebody has gone very much astray, and the sooner

Rowdy Prisons

the source of weakness is discovered the better for everybody concerned and for the good name of our penal procedure. Since the great Dartmoor mutiny there have been sporadic outbursts at that same grim settlement and in other great gaols. Christmas was made hideous for many of the inhabitants of Chelmsford by reason of the uproar created by the convicts in the prison there—mostly men under thirty-five years of age. Warders who had gone off duty had to be recalled, and the disturbances lasted for hours. Now, we find this sort of thing frankly disquieting, and so will the country as a whole. Here is a real job of work for the Home Office to do instead of fooling about with Dora.

* *

A very reasonable help to our shipping, which the Treasury might consider before next April, is a larger depreciation allowance for all types of vessel. It would help renewals and so create employment. Anyhow the Cabinet is

Back to Coal

known in the City to have important work-reviving plans in hand to restore or galvanise into activity the dormant coal and steel trades. Here is the

crux of remediable under-employment. Swansea is actually enjoying a boom, an infinite change for the better from the days of dog-racing and dol-drums. Anthracite exports for the year should be quite good. And the direct shipping of prairie wheat from Canada to us will stabilise freights. Ottawa in wheat, coal, and tinplate is justified of her children. There is reason to believe that Welsh anthracite will lead the way to better trade throughout our coal industry.

**

According to the Psalmist the way of a ship on the sea was beyond the comprehension of man.

The Tall Ships

He was not very wrong. So rapidly has post-war ship design developed that a modern 40,000-ton liner costs less to run to Montreal than a 20,000-ton 30-year-old rival. Very little sign of permanent revival will mean new big orders to all classes of shipyard. Six months ago only three cargo vessels out of ten on the British Register were in commission, often enough with half-a-cargo or on a one-way voyage. Already five out of the ten are back on a job of work with steadier freights. The days of a 6s. 6d. freight from Tilbury to Port Said are past: it was less than the cost of a dog-licence.

**

Mr. A. Wyatt Tilby, who has been absent on leave, has resigned the editorship of the *Saturday Review*. He will, however, contribute from time to time articles and signed reviews to its columns. Beginning with the issue of January 7, the price of the *Saturday Review* will be raised from threepence to the traditional and customary sixpence. This step is taken in order that we may be able to maintain and, as we hope, to raise to an even higher level the literary quality and the general interest of its contents.

**

A letter in our correspondence columns, signed "G.C.P." recounts an experience with London 'buses which is common enough,

Omnibus?

as is the spectacle of a covey of 'buses of a like number running together, with an enormous wait for those who just miss this covey before the next gaggle arrives. According to its own plan the L.G.O.C. is probably an extremely efficient organisation. The trouble is that this plan so often thwarts the convenience of the public. It is, moreover, beyond question that public convenience can be ignored far more easily than in the ancient days of competition along 'bus routes. We are back to the vices of monopoly in almost all matters of public utility, from banking downwards, and such measures as the London Traffic Bill fasten more fetters on individual liberty.

It might be supposed that even the powerful monopolist could push his advantage too far. But we doubt whether the supposition is reasonable. Private members of Parliament have lost almost all their power as guardians of public convenience; riots and revolutions are not made for such causes; one cannot impeach a monopolist for this sort of default. And the influence of a monopolistic press is wholly on the side of "Big Business." Some advertisements neither muzzle nor sway great newspapers, but regular series of highly-paid advertisements certainly have that effect. So there is no hope of honest and candid criticism except in weekly or monthly publications, which may be fearless but which can be ignored by Big Business and its muzzling orders. All these things will be worse before they are better. But that is not to say that they will never be better.

**

THE OPTIMIST

[Life was never more worth living than it is to-day.—Canon Wilkinson, *The Observer*.]

A Mr. Wilkinson, a clergyman—a real live Canon—

Scorning to hide behind the signature of "Anon" Is bold enough to say That "life was never more worth living than it is to-day,"

A statement which I find it difficult to follow

And in fact am entirely unable to swallow.

Personally I get very little enjoyment

Out of the ghastly figures on unemployment,

Nor can I bring myself just yet

To be hilariously happy about the American Debt.

Neither do I feel it is going to be tremendous fun

To pay my first instalment of Income-tax on January One,

(Though naturally as a good citizen I do not grudge it

If it is *really* going to help to balance the Budget).

I can hardly be expected to greet the fact with cheers

That my dividends are less than they have been for years,

And I find this constant need for the strictest economy

A considerable strain on my good nature and bonhomie.

And quite apart from my personal concerns

Wherever one turns

There appears to me

To be

Very little cause for contentment.

Not that I feel any resentment

Against Canon Wilkinson—not a bit,

Far from it.

I envy him, but (if he will forgive a somewhat militaristic confession)

It would take a whole battery of canons to blow away my depression!

W. HODGSON BURNET.

THIS WEEK'S ARGUMENT

Should We Pave Hell?

YES, BY STEWART HAYTER.

"HELL is paved with good intentions." This is the form in which, as set down by Boswell, the adage was used by Johnson in 1775. A piece of cheap, easy and empty cynicism, and the best thing to do about it is to remember Macaulay's description of the man who recorded it: "Servile and impertinent, shallow and pedantic, a bigot and a sot, bloated with family pride, and eternally blustering about the dignity of a born gentleman, yet stooping to be a tale-bearer, an eavesdropper, a common butt in the taverns of London."

The saying, shoddy as it is, has been trotted out year after year as an excuse for the fainthearts and the weaklings who are afraid to make a resolution because they know their inability to keep it. The New Year resolution has become a joke—not a very good one, perhaps, but used by a sufficient number of people to make it pass as a sort of mass shield behind which shelters a strange type of being professing to find delight in a vapid boasting that he has in a few hours broken all the resolutions he ever made.

Used in relation to him, the old saying is true, and he is the first one to know it, because when his little fits of vainglory have passed he experiences his own hell, and, greatest punishment of all, knows that he deserves it.

But what about those who do resolve sincerely, honestly, determinedly? They may fail, they probably will; but they will be in far better case than the spineless creatures who never set out seriously to do anything at all. They will have had a spell of self-discipline which, after all, is not without its value. They will have had a sense of striving which will have bettered both themselves and the world in which they live.

Think of the puny, stunted little souls who stifle every good intention, who refuse to make a resolution. What hope, or aim, or object can they have? What can their lives hold? How can they contribute either to their own happiness or to the well-being of others? They are the Boswellites and the Johnsonites ridding themselves of an irksome responsibility on the score of an excuse which they know to be tawdry.

Ask them to describe what their own hells are like, and they would not have the resolution to answer truthfully. Yet sometimes, in those quiet moments that come to every human being, they are driven to tell the truth to themselves, and then they know that hell is not paved with good intentions or good resolutions but that it is peopled by those who have professed to scorn both.

So go on having the good intentions and making the good resolutions. And to hell with the Boswells and the Johnsons who sneer at them.

NO, BY A STUDENT OF LIFE.

THERE is nothing more weakening to the moral fibre than to make good resolutions just because the season has swung round to an artificial beginning. It may be bad to break them, but it is far worse to make them. There is just one resolution that all might make anywhere and always—to be themselves—but it is not to be accomplished by trying. A man can only be his complete undivided self by not thinking about it.

In these days the leaders of our thought actually pride themselves on divided selves. They are one thing to-day, another thing to-morrow. And are liable to be a thousand other things, before they leave this life. It is amazing that they should be proud of being no more than a broken kaleidoscope, but such brilliant folk as H. G. Wells and Aldous Huxley are as delighted in this quick change existence as if they were Fregoli or some other music hall performer.

A good resolution implies a split in the self. It is based on the disastrous notion that a bit of us is good, a bit bad and perhaps another bit neutral. Somehow or other we have to discover that we are one and indivisible: all the contradictions which appear in our surface selves really work into a single pattern and behind all our experience lies the single Eye of the self, which has watched our being and our doing throughout time.

The Old and the New Year are symbols which prove the unity of nature. There is no break even when the century ends and a new century begins. Just before the year 1000 all the world was on tenterhooks, convinced that four cyphers presumed to represent the time that had elapsed since the birth of Christ must entail the rolling up of the heavens like a scroll and the shattering of the earth. Many can still remember the opening of this 20th century, though its cosmical significance was a little shaken by the controversy as to whether it began on Jan. 1, 1900 or Jan. 1, 1901. Time and our lives slide along as swiftly and as smoothly as a great river, and try as we may to check them there is no break in their continuity.

If it were possible to make a good resolution—the "good intention" of the earlier proverbs is better—that we would give up thinking ourselves better, and just let ourselves feel better, we should have made the first step on the road to true happiness for ourselves and others. Rewards and punishments must be forgotten. There can be no judging of others. In its depths every self is divine. The Kingdom of Heaven is within a criminal just as it is within an Archbishop, and good resolutions only obscure it.

Our first duty to our neighbour is to make ourselves perfect, and charity has no meaning unless it is a part of the self. So let the world turn inward, and there will follow that change of heart, which alone can guide us into safety like Ariadne's thread through the tangled Labyrinth of life.

An Unknown Fragment of a Persian Fable

By Omar Khayyam, junior

GR^{EAT} was the rejoicing at Baghdad. The government of Artaxerxes, who in recognition of his services to mankind had assumed the title of "God's Own Countryman," had issued a threat that, if the sum of one hundred thousand shekels lent to Persia and Egypt in order to withstand the inroads of the Mongolian hordes were not repaid according to the terms of the funding agreements between the three states, the Babylonian treasury would foreclose its mortgage on a large stock of dried dates and Nile cotton. This had befallen at a moment when Mohammed-ibn-Ishâq, the Grand Vizier of the Persian King, and Rameses, Premier and Lord High Treasurer to the Only Pharaoh, were engaged with delegates of the Celestial Empire, the Amir of Bokhara, the Grand Mogul, and of other potentates too numerous to be chronicled, in the long-awaited but somewhat hanging-fire Congress of Congresses (the aims, hopes, and results of which are too notorious to require more specific mention).

The Flying Camel

Back from Ispahan, where the Congress was in process of being held, hastened Mohammed-ibn-Ishâq on the wings of his Flying Camel. Back from Ispahan hastened Rameses, the great Egyptian, his litter drawn by six fiery coursers, to confer with his Persian colleague on steps to avert, or at least mitigate, the blow. Mohammed was first to arrive at Baghdad. The Hall of the Thousand Delights in the palace of Haroun Al-Raschid on the banks of the Tigris was dusted by a thousand slaves: all was ready for the worthy reception of Rameses, Lord High Treasurer to the Pharaoh. So did Mohammed await Rameses.

But anon came word that Rameses was sick. Overstrained by his recent exceptional labours, he had developed a cold and therefore prayed his friend, Grand Vizier to the Great King, that he would so far derogate from customary ceremony as to come himself to the Egyptian embassy (where Rameses had put up) there to confer, instead of putting on a sick colleague the further strain of leaving his couch. Mohammed, nothing loth to show courtesy to a colleague, albeit of a foreign nation, readily assented and at the appointed time arrived, accompanied by five hundred Writers on the Tablets, and by a suite of experts, secretaries and interpreters. "Tell the World," he said to the Writers on the Tablets as he turned for a second on the doorstep, "that my dear friend Rameses and I have formed a Common Front. Ere the shadows of eve fall the Final Settlement will be achieved." And he went in.

The Golden Bowl

In a chamber marvellously painted and adorned with statues of the gods of Egypt Rameses reclined. He sprang from his couch, receiving

Mohammed with infinite civilities and, as a slave struck on a golden bowl the hour of Two, the conference began. The slave struck on his golden bowl the hour of Three; still the conference went forward, still the Writers on the Tablets waited without. Time passed. At the moment when the bowl resounded with the last stroke of Four, Rameses leaped lightly to his feet. "Gentlemen," said the great Egyptian, "you are aware that I have been greatly overstrained by my recent exceptional labours. I have developed a cold. I regret to say that it is impossible for me, without serious danger to my health, to take further part in this discussion. I will leave you, O Mohammed-ibn-Ishâq, to continue the conference with the ambassador of my master, the Only Pharaoh, and with our experts, secretaries, and interpreters." So saying he passed with a swift, easy step from the hall.

A Fair Arm

An astonished and a wrathful man was Mohammed-ibn-Ishâq. But not nearly so wrathful or astonished as when, leaping to a window, he spied Rameses tripping down the steps and into a lordly litter waiting for him at the gates. And from out the curtains of the litter Mohammed-ibn-Ishâq saw emerge a fair arm, and he knew that arm for the arm of the Princess Homai, the pearl of pearls, outshining all the houris of Alexandria and Baghdad. Then did the Great King's chief minister descend the steps in turn and showed to the Writers on the Tablets his full face wreathed in thunderclouds. "Tell us, my lord," said the Writers, "about the Common Front." But Mohammed strode on. "Tell us," they pleaded, following his bulky form, "tell us but one word." Mohammed-ibn-Ishâq turned on the Writers with a roar. "I will tell you one word," he shouted, "and if you inscribe it on your tablets I will have you all hanged!"

A "PUNCH" ANTHOLOGY

Mr. Guy Boas has compiled "A Punch Anthology" (MacMillan & Co. 6s.) and he has done it very well. We have had many collections of pictures from *Punch* and an admirable book of considerably earlier verse. This time we get prose and verse, all of it the fine flower and flavour of *Punch's* wit and humour, none of it dated by topical allusion, but all of it genuine literature. Mr. Boas writes a short, partly erudite, and always human foreword in which he describes the duty of *Punch* as that of reminding readers in Walpolian words that "While life is a tragedy to those who feel, it is a mighty fine comedy to those who think." His anthology fulfils the duty.

Overwhelmed By Wealth

By J. H. Blusner

I HAVE begun to wonder of late if books, which most of my life I have counted among my greatest blessings, are not getting to be among my greatest cares and sorrows. A queer enough preamble to most people, no doubt.

It is the way they are increasing that disturbs me. They are beginning to overwhelm me by sheer weight of numbers. My shelves groan under the burden of tomes, volumes and products of the printer's art which I feel pretty sure I shall never live to read. Not because I do not want to, but because I know that it is a physical impossibility to do so.

I have lived long enough and read enough to realise that at my swiftest pace of absorption I cannot humanly get through more than a small portion of the worthy works I have garnered (mostly from second-hand bookstalls) during the course of my many meanderings.

Weird Multiplication

My conscience can witness that I have always been actuated by worthy and honourable motives. In my time I have been a great reader, and I had every intention of becoming acquainted with these new denizens of my shelves; indeed, I had looked forward to profiting considerably by the mature and mellow wisdom enshrined within their covers. As I say, the whole tragedy has been that they have multiplied in such an overpowering and, to me, weird manner.

Weakness and vacillation, as is so often the case, is at the root of the trouble. After what I have already confessed, it will hardly be credited perhaps that I am still adding to the neglected and benighted company. But I am.

My trouble is that I cannot pass a bookstall; I simply cannot hold an undeviating course if there is a collection of books exposed anywhere within the compass of my passage.

Often—indeed, invariably, these days—my intention is to dally for just a minute: one little minute, no more. I tell myself there can be no harm in that. One surely can look at a book without necessarily buying it. It will be interesting, I say to myself, to see if there is anything new since I happened along last time. Alas! What self-deception; what sophistry! In like manner does the dipsomaniac trifle with thoughts of the fiendish and soul-destroying glass.

A Deep Mystery

It may be the fancy of a mind becoming somewhat disordered on this topic, but in my native town, where there happens to be a particularly good second-hand book shop, I have of late fancied that certain books, which the proprietor and his confederates have got to know I favour, are now displayed in a manner that ensures my attention

being ensnared should I waver in my journey past.

Not by any other line of reasoning can I account for the mysterious appearance of certain books after I have bought one of their kind on a previous visit.

Then again I have fancied—and here, too, I may be suffering from hallucinations—the proprietor and his myrmidons watch me through the untidily heaped-up tomes inside the windows much as trappers might watch an innocent lamb gambolling near a baited trap.

It is not the prices of the books that I quibble at, for they are often ridiculously cheap; but the fact that, instead of being a comfort and inspiration to me, the spectacle of their magnifying numbers gazing reproachfully down at me from the groaning shelves has become painful and demoralising. I possess many old book cronies that I should like to commune with again, but the insistent claims of the newcomers, and claims, too, that have the backing of merit, put me in a nerve-racking quandary. My rate of reading seems to have slowed down of late rather than accelerated.

In sooth, the situation appears to be fast getting out of hand.

Bookstalls for me have become a source of infinite perturbation. The sight of one of them in the offing nowadays gives me a palpitation. When I am in London I shun Charing Cross Road like the plague. I regard it as the broad and gaudy road to perdition—a road paved with good but broken intentions.

I sometimes have premonitions of myself ageing into the obsessive book-grubber, piling books on books like an automaton—a shabby fellow peering and poking over the penny and tuppenny tubs and shelves like an old mendicant scratching about a dustbin in the early hours of the morning.

This Must Cease!

There is left possibly the sacrificial holocaust. But so far I have not been able to contemplate that contingency without a shudder. I doubt if it is in my nature to summon up sufficient resolution for such a ruthless step. At the same time, I realise that things cannot go on much longer as they are. Either I must steel myself to this great act of immolation or ignobly accept the humiliating position of the mere metricious hoarder of books who knows that he will never be able to get the least benefit from the volumes he keeps heaping up so wrong-headedly; or if he does, then only at the expense of those sadly neglected and well-deserving tomes at home so patiently awaiting their turn.

And, strangely enough on this, to me inexpressibly vital matter, not one of the many books I have read offers me any light, guidance or consolation.

Music and Musicians By Herbert Hughes

HOW often it happens that the experiences which give one the greatest pleasure are those that occur on what we call a busman's holiday. No doubt it is just because one has, as it were, removed the livery of one's occupation and for the time being escaped all responsibility that these moments are specially precious. Within the last week I found myself enjoying two such occasions, each privileged in the sense that they were not public; in the sense, however, that they have some bearing on musical art in this country I feel that they should be free of that privilege. I will be bold, then, and declare that one was the first performance of Arthur Bliss's new Quintet for Clarinet and Strings, that the other, under another hospitable roof, was the singing of a Danish artist of uncommon accomplishment, Madame Povla Frijsh.

When Arthur Bliss's "Rout" burst upon the International at Salzburg ten years ago it was clear that a new note was being sounded in English chamber music. In the same year his so-called "Colour Symphony" was produced at Gloucester and started people guessing. The young man who had studied under Charles Wood at Cambridge, and at the R.C.M. under Stanford and Vaughan Williams, was obviously of an independent turn of mind, little inclined to walk in well-trodden ways. It is true that his particular independence synchronised with the independence of other young, and less-young, men on the continent of Europe, and it is true that most of what was novel in the restive years immediately following the Armistice has become the small change of our present musical coinage. In his choral symphony, "Morning Heroes," and the "Quintet for Oboe and Strings" Bliss had left all this small change far behind. He was incapable of standing still; incapable, I think, of contentment and self-satisfaction. Self-criticism had become second nature.

A New Masterpiece

Extreme fastidiousness in league with this self-criticism has had the effect of curbing Bliss's naturally high spirits—to the extent, at least, of preventing over-production. It is not surprising, therefore, to discover in the new "Quintet" a masterpiece of rare distinction, so beautifully made that one is immediately aware that it contains not a note too little or a note too much. The players—a fine team—were the Kutcher String Quartet and Frederick Thurston, principal clarinettist of the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra.

In choosing the clarinet as the solo wind the composer, of course, gives himself greater latitude in compass and in colour than that afforded by the oboe: in the exploitation of its range he virtually commands three instruments, using them alternatively with great variety of effect through the four movements. The clarinet, indeed, is so broad-minded that it can carry on dialogues with the fiddle at its highest register, with the viola at its middle, and with the 'cello at its lowest—though the 'cello may have the last word. Bliss explores

all these possibilities with humour and subtlety, terse as ever in statement when the situation requires it, while avoiding any display of that virtuosity he might so easily claim.

So much for the general technique. The stuff of the music, it seems to me, would require more space for its analysis than I have here. There is nothing in it of that chattering superficiality once beloved of "Les Six" and brought to such triumphant banality of Prokofieff and the later Stravinsky. Away from all poetic implications and programme it is a work that has much in it of the intellectual significance of "Morning Heroes" and here and there a fine excitement that the cerebral school simply cannot touch. The lines are deeper cut and broader than in any work the composer has yet given us. At the risk of being misunderstood I should say in a word that it has more heart: which means that it expresses more experience. At 30 Arthur Bliss was as brilliant as the rest; at 41 he has progressed beyond his own cleverness towards a spiritual freedom and courage that I, personally, much admire.

When this "Quintet" is first publicly performed by the Kutcher combination in February I should like to hear it in association with works of Mozart and Brahms for the same instruments. I think it will be found to deserve its place.

Povla Frijsh

Picture to yourself a woman singer who combines in her art and person something of the attributes of Sarah Bernhardt, Réjans, Yvette Guilbert and Chaliapin! An extravagant and unlikely composition, you would say, but such is Povla Frijsh, the Danish singer. So far she has made no public appearance in London, though she has given a recital at the American Women's Club. It was at a *soirée* in St. John's Wood last week that this remarkable singer set an audience of connoisseurs hunting for their best adjectives.

She might be described as a dramatic mezzo-soprano did that not seem to exclude her gifts as a *diseuse*, as a pianist, and as a singer of light and intimate songs. To be associated with great American Orchestras, like the Boston Symphony and the Philadelphia under Kussevitky and Stokowski, to sing *Lieder* with the style and understanding of a Gerhardt, cheeky little French songs with the *diablerie* of Yvette, dramatic *scenas* with the towering passion of the great Russian bass—here are achievements that would seem to require at least three personalities, like Mr. Bliss's clarinet. Yet such is Madame Frijsh.

Her two groups of songs the other evening were well chosen for a studio performance and included such unfamiliar things as Schierbeck's picturesque "Song paa Floden" (Song on the River) Sinding's "Der Skreg en Fugl" (A Bird's Cry), Cui's "La Fontaine de Czarkoë Zelo" and Dupont's "Chanson de Noisettes." It is to be hoped that this richly talented lady will give a public recital soon so that we may make further acquaintance with her extraordinary art.

THEATRE By JOHN POLLOCK

Royalty. A Cup of Happiness. By Eden Phillpotts.

"YUUM leear" is the retort proper to the present occasion for the benefit of superior people who find Mr. Eden Phillpotts' entrancing bucolics below their level. Those at all acquainted with the Devonshire dialect will recognise that the lie direct when given in it has not necessarily the same shade of meaning as in the mouth of a London van driver; who, to be sure, would certainly leave no room for error, by his expansion of the phrase to "You're a bl—dy liar." It is merely a polite expression of a difference of opinion calling 'o be registered when Mr. Phillpotts is accused of conventionality and of writing down to the unsophisticated. A suggestion seems sometimes to be implied that Mr. Phillpotts should always write in the strain of "The Secret Woman," but, many though there be (including the present writer) who would welcome a return thereto, it may be doubted whether more do not prefer to follow him on yet another of his prodigious junketings.

Conventional? Of course "A Cup of Happiness" is conventional, for it is a comedy and convention conditions all comedy. The art of comedy is like the pattern in a Persian carpet, the joy in watching which lies not in unexpected twists and turns, but precisely in the regularity of its loops and angles that for ever seem to change and for ever come back to the starting point.

So far from this being food for the unsophisticated, no one can really enjoy it who lacks intellectual zest, and a man should be chary of thinking the doings of Mrs. Veryard of Willowbrook Farm, High Holberton, and her family foolish on penalty of getting the answer once given by a rustic Devon jester to a condescending visitor. "I hear," says the gentleman, "that you are the fool of the county." "Ah," came reply, "I zee yū do your awn business in that line."

The Widder

Mrs. Bessie Veryard is a comely widow, and a jovial, for all she is a martinet, young for all her grown-up sons and daughter, and with the best right in the world to set her cap at Jonathan Berry, late huntsman to the East Devon; but when it comes to Bessie's elder boy Adam, barely breeched at 33, and his stripling of a brother and a girl scarce out of her teens wanting to marry too, then surely you can hear the brimstone sizzling and smell the deluge a-coming, as old Toby Gigg, that marvellous knarled misogynist and headman at Willowbrook, might say. Jonathan Berry is a fine figure of a man. It might be to him and Toby that the anecdote told of another huntsman belongs. "Voach (tread down) that there hadge," said the huntsman, suspecting a hidden hare. "Voach 'un yourzelve," retorted the labourer. "Why!" thundered the huntsman. "Wan o' my tap-büüts's worth more'n all yū be."

We do not see Berry in "tap"-boots, but in gallant checks and a canary waistcoat, nothing

loath to be hooked by the widow, as old Toby does say. So off they go for their honeymoon in such high spirits that they hardly notice the hangdog looks of two couples forbidden in stinging terms to marry, Tom Veryard and Jemima Didham, the prettiest girl and one of the best dairymaids in High Holberton, who has been badly told off by the vivacious widow, and Rose Veryard and Tod Bartlett, huckster, i.e., salesman, of the farm produce, who has been told off still worse; nor yet those of Adam, who catches it daily so hot that a better world alone seems to hold promise of respite, or of Milly Venn, the Willowbrook champion dairymaid who is fired for being so glum, or—worst of all—Willie Yaw, the "white witch" or wise woman of Holberton, to whom Mrs. Veryard most rashly refuses the loan of a broody hen.

Willowbrook Patterns

It is a dangerous thing to use a white witch spitefully. You may be "overlooked," or yet worse things befall, as the new Mrs. Berry finds to her cost. No sooner has the honk-honk of the honeymoon taxi died on the sultry rose-laden atmosphere than Willie Yaw proceeds to lay her lines. With what sorcery she instils into the mind of downtrodden Adam that he is in love with Milly Venn and she with him, and that once he's taken wife his mother will be no more than a "dowager" ("That's a fine word—dowager!" cries Adam) and he will be the head of the family ("Why, zo I be!" thinks he), and how the Berrys returning unduly soon from honeymooning are confronted with three married and marrying pairs, and with many attendant and, to Bessie, detestable permutations come about in her absence, and yet how all, through a lucky happening reported by Willie Yaw, is transfused into liquor for a true cup of happiness, forms the pattern in Mr. Phillpotts' carpet.

There is in Mr. Phillpotts such a nice understanding of simple folk and such deep sympathy with unspoiled human nature that I should forgive him even did I think the stuff of his weaving slight, which I do not. And this quite apart from the fount of genuine drollery which bubbles up through his lines and rocks the audience with

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Entertainments

ACADEMY CINEMA

Oxford Street (Opp. Warings)

Gerrard 2981

Pabst's magnificent fantasy

"ATLANTIDE"

With Brigitte Helm

QUEEN'S THEATRE

(Gerrard 4517)

Monday next at 8.40. Mats. Wed. and Sat. 2.30

BARRY JACKSON presents—

"FOR SERVICES RENDERED"

By W. Somerset Maugham

Cedric Hardwicke, Louise Hampton, C. V. France

The Joys of Winter

By Nigel Green

A SUNNY summer is almost too idyllic; it makes me doubt reality. The warm sun, the soft wind, and the country a beautiful Hesperides, induce me to dance to the mental image of a roguish piping Pan. If I turn tramp for a few days, wallowing in the easy climatic conditions, I begin to doubt the efficacy of our sedentary civilisation. The sun is a pagan stimulation, and I become the elemental animal. I drift from the City to the sea-gulls on the Cornish cliffs shrieking their challenge to Heaven. And the long summer evenings are like a fairy tale and I hate having to go home.

Winter comes along with fog, endless rain, and biting winds, to remind me that the weather has its inconstancies as well as woman. Then, I creep into my stone hovel and find ineffable comfort in the hearth and fire.

The warmth of a fire is something much more intimate than the aloof but communal warmth of the sun. Environment adapts itself to the sun, but I, by lighting my fire, create a warmth purely of my own making. The fire is my companion; the sun is far too God-like. I and my fire shut ourselves in from the cold outside. The rain knocks on my window, and the wind shouts at me impatiently, but I tell them, with the greatest pleasure, to go away and that I'm not seeing any-

(Continued from page 692)

laughter that will, if first impressions tell anything, resound in Dean Street till our own summer catches up that of Willowbrook Farm.

Mr. Phillpotts is renowned for writing good parts for actors. He is rewarded at the Royalty by two performances that shine out above the work of an efficient company. Whoever relishes fine acting should hasten to witness the ineffable scene of Adam Veryard's courtship of Milly Venn rendered by Mr. Mark Dignam and Miss Winifred Hindle. The author gives them good matter, but they put such an edge on it by the singular ingenuity and depth of their acting that words could hardly be found to exaggerate its excellence.

One thing alone could beat this: Mr. Leon M. Lion's consummate art as the ancient Toby Gigg, who acts as a Greek chorus to the play or as marker at the game of *pelote Basque*, chanting its phases and emphasising the beauty of the points scored. Mr. Lion is so justly esteemed for his enterprising management that his talent as an actor is at times in danger of being missed. Indeed he does not act with nearly enough regularity for our taste. He is one of the half-dozen very best actors on the English stage and in some respects not inferior to any. There is no one who can hold a pause to the last infinitesimal fraction of a second like him, or break one with such masterly snappiness, hardly anyone who can put into so tiny a lapse of time such a series of muscular or emotional gradations.

one to-day. I cannot look at the sun . . . it is far too big and bright; but I can see wonderful pictures in my fire . . . that red-hot passageway in the middle leads down to some Hell and Purgatory where Dante is being shown the sights by Virgil. The fire is the most obedient slave in my domesticity; it rises with a glorious burst of flame out of the tartarean background of my hearth, and it glimmers, sparks, and fades into the nothingness of its night, at my bidding. Only winter gives me the chance of feeling that I have command of one of the inexorable laws of nature. My fire fulfils its destiny.

The yellow fogs of London undoubtedly depress me if I only consider their actuality, their smell, the dirt they always succeed in depositing on me; but, if I turn child again, they become a medium for the most exciting phantasies. There seems to be a preference nowadays for things we cannot feel or touch, abstractions of the mind, as a reaction against the material things which sooner or later give us a dig in the back. I can only sense fog, because it writhes about and blots out objects while it itself has no meaning of mass and outline; I cannot grip it, it just oozes: all most ghostly. I see only obviousness in street lamps on a clear night, but in a fog the same street lamps become most mysterious . . . It is as if all matter was being broken up and reverting to its vaporous beginning, and the street lamps are eyes of warders of some iconoclastic God, watering with sympathy for the disillusionment of our unparalleled self-satisfaction. But fog has its physical attraction also. I collide suddenly with figures, the traffic jams, policemen become demented, and taxi-drivers open their mouths to curse and swallow fog. I appreciate my fogless room, warmed by the fire, all the more for the contrast.

Poets have seldom praised the winter except for the beauty of the snow on the trees and the rooftops, and the jangling bells of the snow-sleigh. But all that belongs to another age: snow doesn't fall like it did once upon a time. I don't find the beauty of winter by looking out of the window, but by looking into my room. My life may become more sedentary in winter, but much less dreamy. Most people need the soft caressing wind rustling in the sea of foliage to make them dream; I certainly do. I notice the pictures on my walls again in winter, because the picture in the park is not entrancing. And I resume acquaintance with books, because I can no longer play tennis.

A business man blesses his home on a wintry night; its cosy interior is an oasis in a slough of despond. He shakes his umbrella, takes off his dripping overcoat, hurries into the sitting room, and stands with his back to the fire.

"Gosh! I'm glad I'm home," he says in a very good imitation of a Ulysses returned to an awaiting Penelope.

The Popularity of Squash Rackets

By G. R. M. Nugent

THE remarkable popularity of squash rackets is due not only to the exceptional facilities and conveniences of the game, but also to its peculiar charm. For most people, however, its convenience is the reason for starting it, and its charm the reason for continuing it.

Although the game has been in existence for the last eighty years, it is only recently that it has been played much. Before the war, the upper classes, who were then almost the only games players, had so many diversions and so much time in which to enjoy them that the attractions of squash rackets made no particular appeal to them. It was not until after the war when everybody had less money and less leisure that the game began to be played much. The men who had played rackets and could no longer afford it were probably the pioneers of this movement.

Cost of Courts

Although rackets is a first-class game and, as a game, much better than squash, the great cost of balls and rackets and the high overhead charges make it too expensive for most people. An electrically-lighted squash court can be built for a quarter of the price of a rackets court, which is, by the way, almost impossible to light artificially, and the playing expenses of squash are only a fraction of those of rackets. Consequently, except in the big public schools, the Universities, and a few London clubs, rackets is now hardly played at all, and the former rackets players have turned their energies to squash.

Since the first amateur championship was held in 1924 an ever-increasing number of courts have been built in clubs and private houses all over the country. It costs upwards from about £400 to build a new court, but enthusiasts with limited means have successfully converted old ball-courts, garages, barns, etc., for a quarter of this figure. Although many of these are the wrong size and material, it does not prevent the owners from enjoying the game just as much as if they were standard.

Speed and Endurance

There is something peculiarly fascinating about the actual game. It combines all the speed and endurance of boxing, without its physical discomfort and injury, with the precision and neatness of billiards without its aestheticism. At no other game is there such a blending of brain and brawn, such scope for subtlety and strength. With brain or with muscle alone some measure of proficiency can be achieved, but it requires the nice combination of the two to produce the expert. The natural temptation to slam away at the ball all the time must be resisted and variation of pace and angle must be introduced to confuse the opponent.

Bang! He serves the ball on to the front wall; it comes off hard and true into the back-hand corner. I can see it's going to be a brute if it bounces, so I race forward and volley it hard back across the court into the fore-hand corner. He is caught on the wrong leg by the suddenness of my return, and is only just able to turn back in time to hit the ball as it comes off the back wall and boost it up via the side wall on to the front wall.

Two Racers

I watch his stroke and am already moving up the court with the ball, to play it as soon as it comes off the front wall. I steady myself and attempt a delicate drop shot which goes just above the board. He just retrieves it by racing up behind me, and hits it hard back across the court. But I am ready for it and volley it back past him before he can recover, to a length which does not reach the back of the court so that he cannot return it. I have won the rally. It was a short one but well played, and so the game continues with both players racing about the court, exploiting all the strokes, drop shots, lobs, reverse angle and angle shots.

In championship matches the rallies sometimes go to over a hundred strokes. The successful out-manceuvring of an opponent and final victory of the rally is infinitely satisfactory; when to this mental satisfaction is added the complete physical satisfaction obtained from a hard game, the popularity of squash is easily understood. After half-an-hour's play against a well-matched opponent, to subside into a hot bath is the last drop to fill one's cup with contentment. A sense of super-satisfaction creeps over one's exhausted body as one wallows in the bath and thinks out new shots and manœuvres with which to defeat one's opponent at the next encounter.

Fun and Exercise

Squash can be played equally well by men or women, young or old. In fact bad players, provided that they are well-matched, will get just as much fun and exercise out of the game as good players; probably even more, because between good players the game is often spoilt by the large number of lets claimed for obstruction. The game of the expert differs from that of the duffer only by its greater pace and consistency; all the same strokes are produced by both, but not so often or so quickly by the latter as by the former. Thus, at more than any other game, the bad player can enjoy the pleasure of a good shot.

Although squash is not played so much in America as it is here, its popularity is definitely on the increase, and, as it is one of the regrettably few games at which we can beat the Americans, it is to be hoped that our keenness and support for it will be sufficient to maintain this superiority.

The City Without Walls*

By Anne Armstrong

THE City without Walls is a fabulous city, for here men live but do not struggle for life; here women love and are not disillusioned; and here there are no dead, for all who are made free of its unseen bounds have seen something of the Beatific Vision and are worthy to be immortal.

The City is farther away, the poets say, than Sofala or Samarkand, and yet their rivals, the philosophers, report that it is nearer even than the suburbs and the sea; for it is here in our midst, yet most men know it not, and many of those that do have only a fleeting glimpse of its unearthly beauty and it is gone. But whether it is here or there, a city that is set on a hill or one which hides in that other valley of the substance of life (so like and yet so unlike its sister of the shadow of death) cannot yet be told; for some think one thing and some another and nobody knows more than its name.

The name of this City is Love, which is the reason it has no walls; for walls are built to keep out those who lust and covet and will not serve love as it should be served, in purity and humility and selflessness of heart. But these can never seek, far less see and enter, this city built without hands, for they would take it by storm and capture, and leave it drab and desolate, no longer a soul within a body but a body without a soul.

The Understanding which is Peace

Within this fair city are two sorts of citizens; the Platos and Parsifals who seek the one true God, and the Tristans and the Dantes who seek the one true Woman. Which has the better part—those who seek Paradise alone, or those to whom Paradise itself could not exist without Beatrice—is not for mortal mind to say; the quest of the one for the All, of the finite for the infinite can never be wholly achieved, whilst the quest of the other for its complement and counterpart in life is never wholly in vain. For it is a mistake and a blunder to suppose that love's labour is ever lost; if returned, it yields that complete content and utter satisfaction which only true unity can bring, and even if rejected and perhaps repulsed, it may still spend itself in willing service and the long fidelity of years. These things are not fruition, but perhaps they are not entirely frustration, for in the end they bring understanding, and understanding at length brings peace. If love be happy, earth (and surely, surely Heaven) has no such joy; if love be pain and loss and defeat—even so, perhaps, love outweighs all the loveless triumphs of the world.

There are many exquisite things in this anthology, which is culled from every literature and from all the ages: Genesis, St. John, the Buddha, Thomas Aquinas, Thomas Hardy—the whole drama of life is here, or if not the whole drama (since life as we know it also includes terror and hate and weakness and meanness and lies) at least that nobler and ennobling aspect of life which men call love, and through which they sometimes sought, and possibly even found, wisdom as well as happiness.

"I am Afraid"

It is a splendid and even sacred panorama of aspiration and fulfilment, of purification and redemption through love, as perceived and told by the poets, the seers, the philosophers and the mystics; and perhaps if one wished to exhibit the human soul at its best to the critical intelligence of the unknown inhabitants of another planet, this book would be the one of all others that the voyager would take with him. If it be true, as Dante says, that the principle of all action throughout the universe is love, and it is this "that moves the sun in heaven and all the stars," then in whatever strange and solitary world of outer space the traveller landed, something of the meaning if not the magic or the music of Catullus and Crashaw and Heine would survive. So long as life existed there at all, there too would be a city without Walls, some little portion of the infinite imprisoned in the finite.

As it is, every reader will make his own selection from these pages, whether it be from Keats or Goethe or the Blessed Francis preaching to the birds, or from a Chinese poem hitherto unknown to me:

I cannot come to you. I am afraid.
I will not come to you. There, I have said.
Though all the night I lie awake and know
That you are lying, waking, even so.
Though day by day you take the lonely road,
And come at nightfall to a dark abode.

Yet if so be you are indeed my friend,
Then in the end,
There is one road, a road I've never gone
And down that road you shall not pass alone.
And there one night you'll find me by your side.
The night that they shall tell me you have died.

Any man to whom any woman addressed that haunting message of the heart would know that for him at least life and love had not been altogether in vain. And any woman, if so beloved by any man, would know and would treasure the knowledge in her heart, that a City without Walls was to be her heritage at the end.

* The City Without Walls. An Anthology setting forth the Drama of Human Life. By Margaret Cushing Osgood. Cape. 15s.

Red Letter Days

A Few Words about Duty—By Guy C. Pollock

WHILE we were walking together along the grass field on the left of the railway embankment—from which only one misbegot cock pheasant retreated and escaped—I carried on a further conversation with Judy in what I should call a desultory and disjointed manner.

"You think a little talk would do us good? Optimist! What does that mean? It means that I do not share your opinion and that—Judy, to heel!—I wish you would keep your mind for the job you have to do. Yes, it is a job. We all have jobs and if you think of it as fun so much the better for all of us. But essentially it is a job, a duty, an honourable obligation. What does all that mean? It means, as you will discover, a lot of disagreeable self-control and a surrender of your own sweet will that is frequently inconvenient. How will you discover it? I shall unfold it to you at the end of this—Judy! to heel!—yes, I know the bit of cord at the end of the whip stings a bit. That is exactly what I was explaining to you. . . .

The Virtue of a Code

Don't fume so. Haven't you yet realised that one does not plug in the tail pheasants going forward to other guns in front? No, one does not mean me only. It means any of us or all of us. No, I am not at all like Don Quixote—except, as you observe, in being pathetically sane. I never wear armour—damn you, Judy, get to heel! Nor do you? Ah, but you do. Yes, a very thick coat and a vanity that amounts to genius. Anyhow, we have our code of shooting and you will kindly permit me to conform to it. A code? Oh, a set of rules which we think other people ought to observe. . . .

You don't believe there was a bird there at all? But, my poor Zany, there was a bird. I watched the other man shoot it. I saw it fall, I took you there and you couldn't find it. Yes, it is your job to find other men's birds. It is your job to find any bird I want you to find. Yes, you are a sort of employee. No, you are not a slave. What are you? A tyrant. Why do I call myself your master? Because one has to keep up—because I have to keep up appearances . . . Will I please stop these other black dogs from messing up the show? No, I will not. Why not? Because I hate leaving all the runners behind. . . .

Oh, for goodness sake don't sulk. It's so common. And don't pretend. It's so silly. What are you to do? Listen to me. I want to ask you something.

Saints and Sinners

I want to know if anything can persuade you to behave reasonably. Reasonably? Oh, being docile and obedient and energetic and untiring and sweet-tempered and very clever and particularly efficient. And don't snort. You asked for a definition and I gave it you. Can anything persuade you to be-

have reasonably? You started the day well enough and quite tractably. Then you began to go your own way and finally you ran in to a hare and gave a dreadful exhibition. Oh, yes, and then I gave you a whipping. Of course it didn't hurt much. No, that was not because the whip was useless or because I couldn't hit very much harder. Why did I shake you? . . . Well, I lost my temper. Yes, it was a dreadful thing to do. Yes, I am ashamed. But you make yourself enough to try the patience of a Saint. No, I am not a Saint, emphatically not. No, even if I had been I think I should have shaken you.

Anyhow why do you do these things? You come and put—well, try to put your muddy paws on me, you sit and look at me as if you liked me quite a lot, you lick my hand—and yet you won't do these simple little things to please me. And you hate being corrected, verbally or physically. And you know that if you go on like this, you are bound to be corrected. It isn't sane. It's all so easy. All you have to do is to behave properly. Behaving properly? Oh, doing the things one ought to do and leaving undone the things one ought not to do . . . Confound it, Judy, we are not talking about humans; we are talking about dogs. The difference? Oh, soul, brain, and education. Then oughtn't I to set you an example? OUGHTN'T I TO SET YOU . . . ? OUGHTN'T I TO . . . ? Judy, to heel—heel, I say."

AN ECHO OF THE DRUM

[It is proposed to reduce the size of all cruisers to 7,000 tons.—Daily Paper.]

In stately pride the galleons came
This realm of ours to take,
Their banners streaming all aflame
(And yet he finished off his game)
The cruiser—Captain Drake.

With oaken bulwarks high and stout
They crossed St. Alban's Race
And watched him tacking in and out
And missed him as he went about
And cursed him to his face—

Who fired his demi-cannon shot
With trumpets that defied—
And ere their sights were on the spot
Had jibed and swung his yards a lot
And raked the other side.

Give me an English ship and small,
For that's where we would be,
Driving down in a Western squall,
Barking guns and wind and all—
A target wide and clear and tall,
An enemy ship at sea.

KLAXON.

"Farewell to 1932—Novels"

By Anne Armstrong

"FROCKS and Fiction," said a Great Business Man the other day, "are the only trades that are doing well in the present slump, and both are signs of the Decadent Feminism that is ruining England." He talked in capitals like all Great Business Men and even Decadent Females when they are not quite sure of themselves, but his judgment set me thinking. Frocks we can leave out of the reckoning for the moment, but has 1932 really been a good year for fiction? Or has it simply marked time, with the usual record of a few average successes and a large number of relative failures?

The Omnibus

On the whole it has been very much as usual. There are fashions in fiction as in frocks, and in 1932 the omnibus style has definitely come in and the Problem Novel has definitely gone out. (To mention a few of the more "notable" omnibus volumes you probably remember "Four Fantastic Tales" by Hugh Walpole; "The Triumph of Time" by Storm Jameson, and "Recapture" by Clemence Dane.) But the omnibus, after all, is merely a reprint under another name, and the Problem Novel is merely a moral essay dressed up with a triangle of talk to make it readable. The first is simply a method of giving you more for your money, and the second a means of giving you something else (that you probably don't want) for your money, and neither makes much difference in the long run. It is the actual delivery of goods that counts, and looking back there are only a few books that seem likely to mark out 1932 from its predecessors and successors, and to have much chance of being remembered, say, ten years hence.

Galsworthy and Vicki Baum

"Flowering Wilderness" by Galsworthy, and "Helene" by Vicki Baum are two of the high lights of the year: the first as good as the best things in the original Forsyte Saga of which it is the unending continuation, the second as good as "Grand Hotel"; "Family History" by Violet Sackville West perhaps came nearest to these; and "Public Faces" by Harold Nicolson, ran it close. This was slightly handicapped in its appeal for public favour by the fact that it was exclusively a political novel, or rather a political prophecy in the form of a novel, and in the present twilight of politics this is rather caviare to the general, but its high spirits and brilliancy of style and treatment made it nevertheless one of the outstanding books of the autumn. Then Beverley Nichols' "Even-song" has been dramatised and its reception by both kinds of public must be a matter of satisfaction to its author. And Aldous Huxley cannot be displeased with the tremendous stir made by his revolutionary (leg-pull or forecaste?) "Brave New World."

Mr. Priestley Fails?

On the other hand, Mr. Priestley's "Faraway," of which so much was expected, definitely fell short of the success of "The Good Companions" and "Angel Pavement": it was readable but one does not want to read it again. Against this may perhaps be set "Invitation to the Waltz" by Rosamund Lehman, as a genuine success; with honourable mention to "She Was Sophia" by Ruth Manning Saunders, "Peking Picnic" by Ann Bridge, and "The Provincial Lady Goes Further" by E. M. Delafield. "The Narrow Corner," by Somerset Maugham, did not much appeal to me but it is finding its public; and "Friday's Business," by Maurice Baring, though not in the front rank or likely to be remembered, is having a reasonable success on the author's name.

The Year has seen a rather surprising return to popularity of the historical novel—a form of literature which every publisher rejected at sight two or three seasons ago. (There *are* fashions in fiction as in frocks!) "They Were Defeated," a story of the Caroline period and the Civil Wars by Rose Macaulay, was highly praised by the reviewers and is being widely read. I could not join in that particular chorus; but in spite of its excessive length (and a personal prejudice against the historical novel as being neither history nor novel) I read and enjoyed Feuchtwanger's "Josephus," a study of Old Jewry under the Roman Empire. The other historical novel that deserves mention is Margaret Irwin's "Royal Flush."

A Long List

For the rest, it is probably enough to mention "Magnolia Street" by Louis Golding; "The Brothers" by L. A. G. Strong, a beautifully written book dealing with the peasantry of the Western Highlands; a Horace Annesley Vachell in "The Fifth Commandment"; "The Fountain" by Charles Morgan, which is probably not everybody's story but which should at least be read by everybody; "Chadwick Roundabouts" a fascinating and quaint book by Alec Brown; "Three Loves" by A. J. Cronin—a disappointing book from the author of "Halter's Castle"; Alec Waugh's "Leap Before You Look"; "Isabel" by Gerald Gould; "That Was Yesterday" by Storm Jameson; "Hospital" by Norah C. James; "Nymph Errant" by James Laver; "Green Banks" by Dorothy Whipple; "The Best Story Ever" by Storer Clouston for sheer fun; and the usual P. G. Wodehouse.

And so here is a long list of what has seemed a long year and if I have omitted to mention your particular and pet book then you must forgive me, for the *Saturday Review* column is a short one and the list of novels published in 1932 a very long one. And the summing up? Not really much more than an average year.

THE BLOOM OF YOUTH

Younger Poets of To-day. Selected by J. C. Squire. Secker. 6s. net.

ALTHOUGH Mr. Squire maintains, on the dust cover, that his new anthology forms a compilation from the work of our younger poets, and his brief introduction warns us that "no poet is included over fifty years of age," his pains are devoid of any value if his book does not reveal anything in the nature of discovery. The names of Walter de la Mare and Lascelles Abercrombie are therefore absent for a valid reason; but, among those which are presented, Edmund Blunden, Robert Nichols, Siegfried Sassoon and Humbert Wolfe have nearly mellowed into classics, and the remainder are all names more or less known to the reading public.

Beauty there is in plenty, sound technique, good workmanship, and spiritual testimony; but little or nothing that speaks for this generation, all this generation, and nothing but this generation.

"This is the fifty millionth year—
The world is old—how old it seems!
Young literary gents, flock here
To feed on piles of dead men's dreams,"

says Mr. Owen Barfield in "On Reading an Elizabethan Lyric in the British Museum Reading-Room"; and, with something of a sigh, I am bound to confess that this verse epitomises the public for whom Mr. Squire would seem to have compiled this anthology.

By this I do not mean that the poets here represented are in any sense dead men; but the dreams which they have transformed into enduring passages have been dreamt again and again throughout the ages. They are merely gracefully served up in a fresh dish. Had the compiler not closed his gates to America but opened them wide to all those who have something new to say (providing, of course, their utterance is poetical), had he been less shy of experimenters, and observed the distinctive contribution of this century in the spirit rather than in the letter, we might have been surprised by an anthology of modern poetry which would have gone bang into our bookshelf for good, and off to half-a-dozen friends. As it is this one will help to swell the list (I had almost said the burden) of those already among the shelves of the collectors—if there be any—of anthologies.

Judged purely as an anthology of poetry, however, the book has its supremely good moments; and we should all be grateful to Mr. Squire for having preserved here Mr. Richard Hughes' rugged little masterpiece, "The Singing Furies," which ends so dramatically:

"The sudden tempest roared and died,
The Singing Furies muted ride
Down wet and slippery roads to hell:
And silent in their captors' train
Two fishers, storm-caught on the main,
A shepherd, battered with his flocks,
A pit-boy tumbled from the rocks:
A score of back-broke gulls, and hosts
Of shadowy, small, pathetic ghosts
Of mice and leverets caught by flood:
Their beauty shrouded in cold mud."

This poem was well enough known in the days of "Gipsy Night," but now that Mr. Hughes has

distinguished himself in another field of literature, his early poetry is going out of print. So Mr. Squire has fulfilled his function as an anthologist well by establishing one of his best pieces in this volume.

Other old friends are to be seen looking out at us from the same home—Mr. Blunden's war poems, Mr. Aldous Huxley's "The Poplars," Mr. Frank Kendon's "Orpheus," Mr. Siegfried Sassoon's "The Heart's Journey," and the poems by Geoffrey Scott. Some quite minor poets appear and their work is among the best in the book, but there are, of course, the anthologist's usual surprises. Why no Robert Graves, no Fredegond Shove, no Osbert, no Sacheverell, no R. C. Trevelyan? Perhaps Mr. Squire would reply that one cannot include everyone, not even in 500 pages, and that Edith Sitwell is well represented.

Sometimes the drops are rather too steep to be countenanced even in an anthology of such dimensions. We behold a fair crop of Mr. Edward Shanks at his very best (and how good that best is), and then suddenly,

"Come, baby, and you younger baby too,
You emblems of my summer, come with me
And I will give the summer's fruits to you,
Gathered by us from field and bush and tree.
Your spring makes now my summer, therefore come
With me whom fading spring so long made dumb."

I cannot help wondering whether the anthologist, in the seclusion of his own study, has suddenly caught the echo of some "baby" jazz in the street outside, and confused it with "Emblems of Summer."
A.S.

BRAVERY WITHOUT BOUNCE

Tales of Hazard. Edited by H. C. Armstrong. John Lane. 5s.

HERE you have ten men who have been separately engaged in tasks as terrible and dangerous as could well be devised writing themselves of their experiences, and writing so simply, so easily, without any trace of bounce or bluff, that their tales cannot but inspire the young with a desire to be not only brave but modest. Four of these plain lessons in courage belong to the war, and of these two are contributed by Germans—a submarine and a Zeppelin commander—and their accounts have just the same qualities as those of their opponents.

Then Admiral Evans—"Evans of the Broke"—contributes a preface and the story of the Scott South Polar expedition; and the reader may dive through the Dardanelles with Captain Stoker, go brigand hunting in Turkey with Captain Armstrong (author of "Grey Wolf" about Mustapha Kemal), or face death with Mr. Weston Martyr on the Georges Shoals off Cape Sable. Among the most thrilling of tales packed with excitement are Admiral Gordon Campbell's "Courting Disaster in Mystery Ships" and Major Wren's "Twenty-four hours in the Foreign Legion," that should be read, as well as his novels, by way of corrective to corrosive calumnies of the Legion by cowards and deserters.

VITAL AND DYNAMIC

Wild Decembers. A Play in Three Acts. By Clemence Dane. Heinemann, 6s.

"WILD Decembers" is an important play. It is a beautiful play. It is important by its subject and the depth of understanding with which alone that subject could be approached, beautiful by the delicacy of its treatment and the rare distinction, as well as force, of its writing. These qualities are not unexpected in work by Miss Clemence Dane, but she is an author not always equal to herself and it is a pleasure to record that in "Wild Decembers" she has once again touched a level, high for her, that for anyone else would be very high indeed. Her subject is the life and death of the Brontës. Those thirteen astonishing years, that dowered English literature with a flame which seemed to consume the lives of those in whom it was lit, are here brought into three acts: eight scenes are laid at Haworth, three in Brussels, and one in London.

No common skill was needed to paint convincing portraits of Charlotte and of Emily, for beyond and behind the personal contacts of their lives the reader craves for a sense of their genius. This is where so many plays about great men and women fall down, and almost all about artists. We see them in their habiliments as they lived, but under the make-up they seldom move us, for the reputation they have seems not to be based on anything they do. The only exception to the rule is formed by plays about actors: we can see an actor whether on a corner of the stage, or in the wings, or in private life, giving of his art. Adrienne Lecouvreur, David Garrick, Kean, jump to the mind as examples: they live for us, they are real. But authors, musicians, often even statesmen and soldiers, put upon the stage, are rarely more than tailor's dummies.

Perfection is a word that should be applied with caution, if at all; but it is hard to think of anything more perfect than Miss Dane's portrayal of the Brontë family. She hits the mark with a certainty that makes us gasp. Thus, and not otherwise, we feel, must Charlotte and Emily have been and felt and talked in their relations with one another, with their family, and with their own souls. The fire that inspired and exhausted them springs up again in these fierce, panting scenes with the passion of life itself. Those of Charlotte's confession to the priest in Brussels, where she first finds Emily's manuscripts, and where Emily's death becomes the certainty of to-morrow, are tremendous in their poignant vigour. Indeed there is only one scene where Miss Dane does not quite rise to her opportunity: we hardly feel it possible for George Smith, the publisher, not to have been more overwhelmed by the revelation that the authors of *Jane Eyre*, *Wuthering Heights* and *Agnes Grey* were three sisters from a Yorkshire vicarage.

But this is a minor matter. "Wild Decembers" is an astounding achievement. It is large, vital, dynamic. It will be a disgrace to the organisation of the theatre in England if Miss Dane's play is not promptly seen upon the stage. But it will need to be produced with a passion and an understanding worthy of its conception.

NELL GWYNNE AND THE STARS

Pretty Witty Nell. By Clifford Bax. Chapman & Hall. 12s. 6d.

(Reviewed by WILLIAM KING)

AS might be expected from its title, Mr. Bax's volume is rather a gossip compilation than a serious addition to biographical literature, and as such it should offend few beyond the minority that concerns itself with scrupulous accuracy in the statement of historical detail and in the orthography of proper names.

Mr. Bax has, it is true, two contributions of his own to the life-history of his heroine, which deserve a word in passing. The one, an interpretation of her horoscope, still preserved in the Bodleian, will commend itself to students of astrology more thoroughly than it does to sceptics like the present reviewer, who is glad to know that the rising of Aquarius has been responsible for the extreme charm not only of Nell Gwynne but also of Queen Mary, Ruskin and Jackie Coogan, and who only regrets the absence from this list—doubtless warranted by the best astrological authority—of Miss Mary Pickford, since Mr. Bax's main purport is to acclaim his subject as the World's Sweetheart of her day and of all time.

His second contribution is equally difficult for a lay reviewer to appraise, since it consists in the argument that Nell Gwynne died of syphilis, which she contracted from the King. Charles II is said by contemporary report to have rewarded the Duchess of Portsmouth in 1674 with a handsome present of jewellery as a recompense for a similar infection, and a detailed dissertation in this connection on the medical history of Charles's innumerable descendants is a possible consequence of Mr. Bax's book, which if properly carried out should combine interest and amusement to the highest degree, besides furnishing a complete apologia for a great many children who find it hard to explain why their teeth are so consistently set on edge in this post-war world.

Mr. Bax has worked his way through the latter-day authorities on the history and literature of the period, and he records a special debt of gratitude to Mr. Arthur Irwin Dasent for his *Life of Nell Gwynne*, published in 1924. This record of gratitude would commend itself more heartily to readers of sensibility if it had not been qualified by the deplorably facetious references to Mr. Dasent on pp. X and 259, while the statement on p. 12 that "so far as I can find out, never were animals after the Commonwealth again openly tormented for the amusement of the people" only proves that Mr. Bax's memories of Mr. Dasent's work fail to include p. 242, where reference is made to a survival of bull-baiting at Wokingham in 1840.

On the whole, however, Mr. Bax's volume is pleasant and readable enough, and he displays some skill in the delineation of character, though it may be doubted whether the postulation that Charles II "would probably have had, even at the age of thirty-one, to pause before answering if anyone had asked him the number of women with whom he had carnally consorted" might not have been equally applicable to the majority of the male members of his court.

A Short Guide to New Books

The Hand of Destiny. By C. J. S. Thompson. Rider. 12s. 6d.

This painstaking collection of folklore and superstitions may be of assistance to the student, for it contains in convenient form a quantity of useful material. Unfortunately it lacks any general sense of unity, and the author has been content to lump together a number of superstitions with the barest reference to that psychological meaning which underlies them all.

The Land of Bondage. By J. Kallinikov. Grayson & Grayson. 5s.

This little book of sketches deals with the Russian refugees who after the Bolshevik conquest of the Crimea were transported by British ships to Egypt. They illustrate vividly that peculiarly Russian power of giving to life and its background something of the miserable nerve-racking throb of the dentist's drill. The circumstances—Heaven knows—are tragic enough, but none of the characters is quite earnest enough to play in tragedy. Pale ghosts, the slaves of words, they maunder along on their painful way and provide a wholesome wet blanket of depression for any Westerner suffering from too high spirits.

Night Flight. By Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. Translated by Stuart Gilbert. Desmond Harmsworth. 6s.

The poet of the air has not yet appeared among us and D'Annunzio's description of flying in "Forse che sì, Forse che no," remains the finest piece of literature devoted to the airman. M. de Saint-Exupéry comes a worthy second and his translator has really done him justice. The remorseless will of Rivière, the man whose honour was bound up in the maintenance of the air mail service against storm and death, the tragedy of the pilot who goes out to die in a cyclone for the sake of the airmail and who earns his reward in the glory of the stars above the clouds before the final crash, the bewildered agony of the young wife, stand out like figures of fate against a thundercloud and the horror is intensified, because the author has never a word of comfort, never a suggestion that all this agony and toil had any purpose beyond speeding up a trifle the interchange of probably unimportant letters.

Selections from Dryden. Edited by John Earnshaw. Methuen. 3s. 6d.

This convenient little book may be recommended to those who have small space in their bookshelves for it contains most of the Dryden likely to concern the average man. "Absalom and Achitophel" is recognised as one of the greatest satires in this language and its epigrammatic terseness and polished verse possess an abiding charm, though it brings home to the reader the gulf that lies between the 17th and 20th centuries. It is strange that there is no place in our political life for such verse as Dryden's: he provides caps for the

heads of so many of our modern statesmen; for we too have our Zimris.

A man so various that he seemed to be
Not one, but all mankind's epitome:
Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong,
Was everything by starts, and nothing long.

Denmark and the Danes. By Ethel Carleton Williams. Methuen. 7s. 6d.

Denmark is fortunate in having a book written about her by such a sympathetic and understanding pen. The Danes have been comparatively little visited by the modern traveller, yet they have vast stores of beauty and historical interest to offer. Those who make up their minds to go to Denmark should spend a couple of days with this book first. They will find it well worth while.

Nature by Day. By Arthur R. Thompson, F.L.S. Illustrated by over 100 photographs by the Author. Ivor Nicholson & Watson. 12s. 6d.

Here is a really charming and always well-informed volume. The text is full of excellent matter, enthusiasm, and knowledge. The author has authority and he adds to it that obvious affection for the countryside of England, its birds, beasts, fishes and insects which makes authority a spur to others and attracts disciples. As to the photographs, they are much more than an enrichment of the text. Few photographers of wild life have had a like success, and the interest of unposed, genuine pictures in the true surroundings is enlarged by the actual beauty of photographs and reproduction.

Sir Francis Drake. By E. F. Benson. John Lane. 5s.

This is a cheap edition of Mr. E. F. Benson's now almost famous life of one of the greatest among the men of genius whom 16th century England conceived and bore forth. The book was first published in 1927 and had a success justified by its excellence. Rarely has a novelist so successfully grappled with the difficulties of history: rarely a historian possessed so cunning a pen. In its more popular form "Sir Francis Drake" will achieve corresponding success.

Turnip-Tops. By Ethel Boileau. Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.

Mrs. Boileau writes easily with a real sense of characterisation, though she wastes a good many words on the details of the background. Alison Mallory the mother of a modern family, is charming and sympathetic, but just a trifle too altruistic, too good to be true. Even a Victorian novelist would have allowed her a trifle more than a handclasp from the man she loves. Her children are well drawn, particularly the rebel Colin, who but for his mother's distinctly immoral intervention would have fallen a victim to a hard-baked siren. The book is entertaining reading and some of the descriptions of out-door life, notably the Point-to-Point of the Deepshire Hunt, are first-rate.

THE SCOURGE OF OUR TIME

The Prevention of Cancer. By C. R. Boswell.
Published by the Author. 5s.

THE most terrible scourge of our time is the disease to the study of which the present book is a contribution. This we all know. We all know that, past the age of thirty-five, some ten men out of a hundred, some thirteen women, in all civilised countries die of it, and we are afraid. It is not impossible that in some cases this very fear predisposes to the disease. Yet the case is not the same as in that of syphilis, where Brieux by the terrific onslaught of his play, "Damaged Goods," destroyed the walls of prejudice and ignorance surrounding the subject and, it may be almost claimed, for the first time brought rational treatment within the reach of all. For there the cure and the treatment were known: in the case of cancer the cause or causes of the disease are so disputable as to be barely a matter of useful knowledge, its therapeutic treatment is uncertain, its cure by surgery is effective only within restricted limits.

A Fresh Theory

Institutions such as the Cancer Hospital, that devote endless energy and all available skill to the study and treatment of this grave evil, therefore deserve the fullest measure of support, for they are fighting a battle that may be for the life of any one of us. At the same time light from all sources is welcome amid darkness, and the researches of lay observers are not to be despised. Charlatans should be treated with a severity even more just than in most fields of their pernicious labour, for the propagation of false doctrines and the purveyance of quack remedies must here lead to directly fatal results. Mr. C. R. Boswell is emphatically not a charlatan. He has no remedy to offer, no cure to propound. But he has a fresh theory as to the cause of cancer in support of which he brings forward the evidence of a large body of statistics. It has been said that with statistics anything may be proved; yet without them on such a subject we should be deprived of hope.

Simple Suggestions

Mr. Boswell's theory is that the basic cause of cancer is failure adequately to get rid of carbon dioxide from the body or, in the case of certain trades, excessive absorption of this gas. Mr. Boswell would probably be the first to admit that further investigation is required before his theory could be accepted. Wider inquiry might indeed prove it baseless. All that can be now said is that, to a lay mind accustomed to weighing the value of evidence in its bearing on the important matters of normal life, that supplied by the wide range of facts assembled by Mr. Boswell from the Registrar-General's reports does give prima facie colour to his inferences, and that the case he presents is worthy of careful examination. Mr. Boswell, we have said, has no cure to offer. But he has suggestions for prevention, and they are so simple and so acceptable to common sense that, whether or no they have the specific value he

believes, they may be recommended to everybody.

To follow Mr. Boswell's recommendations can at all events only conduce to general good health, for they are these: Always breathe fresh air, take plenty of exercise, and adopt a moderate diet. One of the ascertained facts as to the incidence of cancer is: that the death-rate over the whole South of France is far lower than that in the North, and one must note as among the characteristics of life in Southern France sunshine, fresh air, and a diet in which wine, meat, olive oil, fruit and garlic are prominent. This is a fact not mentioned by Mr. Boswell, who only deals with English statistics, but it seems, so far as it goes, to support his thesis.

Another fact he should consider, which this time tells against him, is that many animals, e.g. dogs, cats, and often birds habitually induce a state of semi-poisoning by carbon dioxide in order to ensure sound sleep, by covering their nostrils with their tails or feathers. Why then, if his theory is correct, are they not specially prone to cancer? Enough has been said to show that Mr. C. R. Boswell's book, though containing but 132 pp., merits serious attention as indicating a useful line of inquiry.

A PROPHET-ARCHITECT

Pugin. By Michael Trappes-Lomax. Sheed & Ward. 15s. net.

AUGUSTUS Welby Northmore Pugin, son of Augustus Charles Pugin, the architect who, on the directions of John Nash, virtually discovered Gothic architecture as a subject of importance, was one of the most remarkable artistic spirits of the 19th century. Mr. Trappes-Lomax, his first real biographer, justly states that into the forty years of Pugin's life was crowded the labour of a century. It is true that he began active work as assistant to his father at the age of 14, so that on reaching manhood he was already not only thoroughly equipped but also an experienced artist; nevertheless, the mere list of his buildings and, still more, restorations, accomplished within less than a score of years, is little short of staggering. Whatever we may now think of the architecture of the Houses of Parliament, it is now admitted that to him is due a large share of the credit for the completed work, if only by the importance that must be attributed to his exquisite draughtsmanship in working over Barry's half-finished designs. The violent assault made on him by Ruskin, whose campaign for the revival of craftsmanship Pugin to a considerable extent anticipated, was in reality based largely on theological grounds, and Pugin's identification of the beauties of Gothic with the revival of Roman Catholicism in England has undoubtedly obscured his fame as an architect. Pugin's biographer is perhaps not free from theological bias, but he makes good the claim for Pugin to be regarded as "the prophet who revived architecture" in England. Mr. Trappes-Lomax has written a book of surpassing interest that must take an important place in the literature of architecture and of early 19th century history in England.

NEW NOVELS

Christmas Pudding. By Nancy Mitford. Thornton Butterworth.

Wind Shaken Timber. By Martha South. Constable. 7s. 6d.

PICTURE the dilemma of young Paul Fotheringay on having his tragic analysis taken for the most uproariously funny novel of the season! I am glad that I took Miss Mitford's "Christmas Pudding" away with me for the holiday. It is ridiculous; it is quite and utterly stupid; it is (and thank you for it Miss Mitford!) preposterous—but how I did laugh! Now this does not mean that if *you* go out and buy "Christmas Pudding" *you* will laugh for you and I may have very different notions about the stupidity and the nonsense of a story and I, after all, read my "Christmas Pudding" after a very generous helping of it (not to mention turkey and stuffing and brandy butter and hot roasted chestnuts) and the story is about Christmas and Puddings and Good Things Like That . . . But I am digressing and I have wandered far away from Paul Fotheringay. Well, after his disappointment at his enormous success (the book sold thousands and thousands of copies—poor man) he worms his way into Lady Bobbin's house as tutor to the small Bobbin because he wishes to write the memoirs of Lady Maria Bobbin, Poetess, and he imagines this to be the only access to her journals. The fun is fast and furious and the characters wonderfully varied. Lady Bobbin, M.F.H., is a complete picture of the horsey woman; Sally and Walter as modern parents with habits and a modern baby are wonderful "take-offs;" but there is no room here to list them all at length—so if you feel that the season of good cheer has not already gone too far to be recalled and you still feel like "Christmas Pudding" Miss Mitford's new book may be the very thing for you.

"Wind Shaken Timber" by Martha South I found particularly beautiful, for the author has managed to convey an atmosphere of weird strength and strange beauty. It centres round Jobaba Michel who found everything in life difficult to understand—she searched in vain for an answer to the Mystery of God; love merely puzzled and frightened her; and her relations with the other people who lived alongside her in the Westmorland fells were divorced from all understanding or sympathy. She did not understand them nor they her. She was seeking and she never found; they were asking and she never gave. And when, at length, she did give she died of the giving.

There are excellent passages in this book for a first novel—passages that give the eerie wonder of those desolate fells; passages that conjure up the haunting scenery and the stark realness of the people who live near "Mickle Fell" and "High Scald Cup" and "Greythorn Nab." Wonderfully picturesque names these and whether or no they are real places seems not to matter very much.

A.A.

THE CALL OF THE SEA

Peter Duck. By Arthur Ransome. Cape 7s. 6d.

"—**A**ND old Peter Duck looked down at her from the top of the quay and wished he was going too. (Going foreign, she is, to blue water) he said to himself. And he thought of other little schooners he had known on the Newfoundland Banks and in the South Seas. He thought of flying-fish and porpoises racing each other and turning over in the waves. He thought of the noise of the wind in the shrouds and the glow of the lamp moving compass card, and tall masts swaying across the stars at night. And he wished he could go to sea once more and make another voyage before it was too late."

That is almost precisely the effect which this book has on the reader, making us, too, wish to go a-sailing. It brings that nostalgia for deep water and wind and spray which drags so fiercely at the heartstrings.

However, we can't all go a-sailing and it must be for those unfortunates who can't that this book was written.

The story contains all the ingredients necessary to make it not only eminently readable, but also thrilling enough to satisfy the most exacting of tastes. What more could anyone demand than a book about the sea together with a buried treasure in the Caribbean Islands, pirates, storms, sharks, a waterspout and a happy ending.

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Films of the Year—By Mark Forrest

JUST before the close of 1931 London had its first opportunity of seeing "The Congress Dances;" this picture bore some relation to Mr. Clair's formula for good cinema, but Mr. Pommer and Mr. Charell were much more ambitious in the use of their music. Writing at that time I ventured the opinion that this film opened new possibilities for the screen, and the year which has just passed has seen the British attempt to realise them.

The truth is that we are not a nation upon whose shoulders gay inconsequence sits naturally; when we try to become Gallic we generally only succeed in being either vulgar or dull, with the result that of the numerous pictures which were turned out by us either on Mr. Pommer's or Mr. Clair's model only one is really worthy of mention. "Jack's the Boy" was funny and well directed by Mr. Forde, but this film was not half so refreshing as either "Un Soir de Rafle" or "A nous la Liberté," the former directed by Mr. Galloni and the latter by Mr. Clair.

So many of these pictures with music have been launched that the output of dramatic films from British studios has been very limited. "The Faithful Heart," directed by Mr. Saville, was competently handled, but the picture which showed most promise only appeared last month. This was "Rome Express" and the director was again Mr. Forde. Here was movement, characterisation and technical excellence; if the story had been better the result might well have been a picture really worth while.

The German Victory

Nothing which the British companies have produced during the year came within a thousand feet of five films which were brought across to us from Germany. Head and shoulders above all the rest was Mr. Pabst's "Cameradschaft," and next to it the same director's "Westfront 1918." The former is a superb picture which should be seen by everyone. Of course it wasn't, and won't be, because there are no stars, no "wisecracks" and what little dialogue there is is in French or German. This drama of a coalmine is, nevertheless, the true art of the cinema and takes its place among the few classic pictures.

The third outstanding German film, "Mädchen in Uniform," directed by Miss Sagen, was referred to at length by Mr. Dark a week or two ago in this paper. This psychological study of adolescence was a difficult subject to tackle, but it was executed with rare understanding. The fourth was "Der Hauptmann von Köpenick," directed by Mr. Oswald, and the fifth "M," directed by Mr. Lang. All these pictures have been shown by the Academy cinema, whose continued success is well deserved. In addition I should mention "The Blue Light" which was financed and directed by Miss Riefenstahl.

During the last twelve months only two Russian pictures were shown and both of these were remarkable. "The Road to Life" was the

first Russian talking film to be shown in this country and, not by any means for the first time, Sovkino succeeded not only in making an interesting picture, but in driving home the wedge of propaganda. The other film, "Alone," directed by Mr. L. S. Trauberg, the brother of the director of "The Blue Express," dealt with the fortunes of a Russian school mistress who is sent to teach the superstitious people of the Steppes. Here for the first time it seemed as though the plan was to be neglected and the individual glorified; towards the end, however, we were back on the familiar lines.

"A nous la Liberté" and "Un Soir de Rafle," to which I have already referred, were the only pictures from France which were noticeable. The former, Mr. Clair's third big film, was somewhat disappointing after his other two, but it contained a good many of those whimsical touches which are the hall marks of his genius, and his direction throughout remained fluent. With "En Natt," the first Swedish picture to be shown in this country for some time, the review of the year's activities on the continent comes to an end, and we are left with the American cinema.

The Hollywood Lot

Hollywood still leads in quantity, but the quality is becoming more and more questionable. One of the greatest directors in the world, Mr. Lubitsch, is stationed there and his three films last year, "The Man I Killed," "One Hour with You" and the recent "Trouble in Paradise" have lost him none of his prestige. After Mr. Lubitsch (and now some way after) comes another German director, Mr. Josef von Sternberg, from whose brain according to the gossip writers sprang Marlene Dietrich fully armed, as Athene from the head of Zeus. The combination have produced "Shanghai Express" and "The Blonde Venus," but I am beginning to think that the modern Hephaestus must have been Mr. Pommer, and I wish they would go back to Germany when perhaps we might get another "Blue Angel."

"Grand Hotel" was the most ambitious picture of the year, but though five stars may mean a final edition of an evening paper in America, they don't mean the "last word" in films. A far better grip was maintained by Mr. John Ford in his direction of Ronald Colman in "Arrowsmith." This film and another, entitled "Melody of Life," which was directed by Mr. La Cava, had all the polish and technical excellence what is inherent in the best American pictures.

Mr. King Vidor's "Street Scene" from Mr. Rice's play, Mr. Clarence Brown's "Emma" and Mr. Franklin's "Smilin' Through" were three other pictures which were excellently played and cleverly directed. George Arliss in "The Silent Voice" gave another of his good performances; his pictures always run smoothly and, as he is not generally directed by the same man, a good deal of this credit for uniform competence probably belongs to Mr. Arliss himself.

CITY.—By C. J. HAMILTON

Lombard Street, Thursday.

THE only topic that has aroused any real interest in a City that is still under the influence of the holidays is the question of the currency situation in South Africa. The prospect of an early abandonment of the gold standard in that Dominion is, in some quarters, welcomed as offering a new way of escape from the world depression. The argument runs thus. Suppose that the price of gold in South Africa were to rise to the level of the London price, say 123 shillings an ounce, there would be a great stimulus to the production of gold on the Rand, since cost of production would not, for a time at least, rise in anything like the same degree as selling price. The annual output of Rand gold is about £45 millions. If this output were largely increased the basis of bank credit would be expanded and the possibility of a great "reflational" movement would be made much easier. So reason those in search of glad tidings for an economically depressed world.

It is, of course, by no means certain as yet that South Africa will abandon the gold standard. The present Government has all along set its face firmly against such a policy, partly in order to show its independence of Great Britain, partly because it is supposed that a serious blow would thus be struck at the prestige of gold and the eventual general return to the gold standard be rendered less probable. The Opposition, on the other hand, has taken the view that South Africa is suffering needless depression which is bearing heavily on the farmers and produce exporters because of the obstinate adherence to the gold value of the South African pound. General Smuts has stated his conviction that such a handicap can not be endured and the political situation has been moving in favour of a change of Government. At present the existing Government is fighting to maintain the gold standard in face of a large foreign gold drain that has been caused by the expectation of an early devaluation. The convertibility of the note has been suspended and the exchange is to be controlled.

Matters in Doubt

Would abandonment provide a new and powerful solvent of the world depression? It would certainly add to the strength of the sterling area and would increase the resistance to an early restoration of the gold standard within that area. That, however, is scarcely the point. Those who believe in the "new solvent" theory rest their faith on the large additions to the world's gold stocks which the abandonment is expected to bring about. But when this belief is examined it will be found to rest on a most flimsy foundation. The annual addition could hardly be more than some £10, or at most £20, millions. In comparison with the addition to monetary gold recently made by the Indian exports, amounting to some £80 millions, either of these figures becomes small. Yet the Indian gold, doubling the annual increment of the world's gold supply, has not brought about the great deflation which is now expected to result

from devaluation in South Africa. And, apart from this quantitative consideration, the fact has to be admitted that the new gold would be only too likely to find its way into those overinflated stocks where it has no effect upon bank credit rather than to those places where the stocks of gold are deficient. In a word, there is no need at the moment for more gold, but for the removal of the obstacles to its better distribution.

The question of South African monetary policy has a much more direct interest for those who hold, or are contemplating the purchase of, South African mining shares. There is no doubt that the abandonment of the gold standard would cause a sharp rise in the shares of those mines which produce low grade ores. Such undertakings as Rose Deep, East Rand, Simmer and Jack and others would be benefited. It must not be assumed, of course, that the South African pound would sink to the present level of the British pound. The extent of the stimulus to production cannot be estimated with any precision. The stimulus, nevertheless, would be considerable.

Indian Stocks

In the investment field two other questions of importance deserve careful study. The first is the outlook for Indian Stocks. The improvement in Indian credit over the last two years has been remarkable. In 1921 India 4½ per cents. touched 55. In 1932 they rose as high as 110½. They now stand at over 105. Where will they be in two or three years time? The improvement has been due mainly to three factors. The large Indian gold exports, the more favourable view of the future constitutional settlement that is now regarded as probable, and the reaction produced by our own conversion operation. The continuance of the first factor mainly depends upon the continued large premium of the rupee price of gold over the dollar price. The end of the third Round Table Conference has come about under circumstances that have strengthened the belief that safeguards will be maintained for some time at least that will ensure a proper control of Indian finance. The influence of the conversion is already diminishing. On the whole the probabilities are in favour of a maintenance of values, despite large short term obligations that will mature during the next six years, at a level somewhat below the present.

The other question of interest relates to the future of German bonds. These also have shown a most remarkable recovery. The Young Loan bonds have appreciated from 39½ to 83. Berlin City bonds from 25 to 63½. The low points represented a valuation appropriate only for virtually bankrupt stock. The present valuations are even now such as to yield returns that are very high if the view is taken that Germany will gradually recover her former position among economic nations. The confidence that is now leading German capitalists to buy back German bonds is likely to be shared increasingly by foreign investors in the coming year and the bonds will probably end the year 1933 at levels distinctly above those now prevailing.

The Saturday Acrostics

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 15

MY FRIENDLIEST GREETING IN THESE PILLARS TWAIN
WHO SEEK WITH CARE WILL HARDLY SEEK IN VAIN.

1. Urgent, perhaps, the message that it brings.
2. Yields information about feathered things.
3. Just half a colour the reverse of gay.
4. Deliver me, and you'll have had your say.
5. When danger threatens, don't let's be at these!
6. Fixed in the earth, gives life to tallest trees.
7. This is my counsel, friends: Behead not many!
8. Core of a vehicle as fine as any.
9. Light 9 you want, sir? You may take a carrot!
10. Behead a fish which might support a parrot.
11. Creature of many words but empty brain.
12. Devoid of any blemish, free from stain.

SOLUTION OF ACROSTIC No. 14

T	u	B
H	e	O
E	x	T
J	u	T
U	n	L
D	e	E
I	m	H
C	a	O
I	m	L
O	i	D
U	p	E
S	o	R

¹ Leander being drowned, Hero in despair threw herself from her tower and perished in the sea.

² St. Matt. v. 45.

³ St. Matt. vi. 15 and xviii. 85.

⁴ Gen. xviii. 11.

The winner of Acrostic No. 12 was Mr. G. K. Paley; the winner of Acrostic No. 13 was Mrs. Allenby; books have been sent.

Next Week's Broadcasting

AT a time when the energies of most people are concentrated on devising suitable entertainment for children, the Children's Hour claims our attention. Starting on Jan. 2nd, 1933, the children are having their own Request Week, during which all the programmes are selected as a result of the voting by the 60,000 Radio Circle members. Children are notoriously conservative, so it comes as no surprise to discover that this Request Week is almost identical with those of the past few years. The Toytown family, so brilliantly created by the late S. G. Hulme-Beaman, will be there, as will Ronald Gourley, Frederick Chester, Norman Hunter, Mortimer Batten, L. du Garde Peach, "Peter," and that most benevolent of scientists, the Wicked Uncle, there is not the slightest doubt that they will all be there in 1934.

There is one new programme which should find its way into some future Request Week, and that is "A Room at the Inn," by Eleanor and Herbert Farjeon, with music by Harry Farjeon. This was produced on Christmas Eve, and was one of the most exquisite contributions to the Christmas programmes. The Organiser of the Children's Hour should lose no time in persuading the Director of Programmes to give adult listeners the opportunity of hearing this little masque, which comes as near perfection as may be.

CORRESPONDENCE

The Wheels of Clay

SIR,—Is this kind of thing democracy, tyranny, or merely inefficiency? Two would-be passengers stood on one night of last week soon after eleven o'clock in King's Road, Chelsea, waiting for a particular 'bus. One came—say, rather, tore along. I stepped into the roadway and signalled for it to stop. It tore on. I shouted at the conductor. He seemed to smile. But another similar 'bus was following behind—swiftly and closely. So I stood where I was and the whole performance was repeated again. Some five minutes later a more leisurely 'bus of the same number took us aboard and the conductor, with possibly self-conscious virtue, asserted that it was his duty to stop. Perhaps it is the duty of drivers not to stop. Anyhow I don't imagine that my experience is singular or that this sort of thing makes Lord Ashfield a popular idol.

Westminster.

G. C. P.

Rats and Mice

SIR,—May I, in these difficult times, suggest a simple way by which millions of pounds could be saved and much disease prevented?

The kingdom is overrun by rats, mice and voles, and their numbers are increasing. The brown rats alone, number some 40 millions; the black species is also multiplying, and now the musk rat is getting a firm footing in Scotland and other districts, and in a few years is likely to become as great a nuisance as it is in Central Europe. Mice and voles are everywhere.

The amount of damage to buildings, embankments, merchandise, crops, food and other property, done by these animals is appalling. They also spread diseases of various kinds including plague, trichinosis, foot and mouth, distemper, dysentery, food poisoning and mange. The methods used for destroying the creatures—flooding, gassing, poison, viruses, trapping, ferreting are expensive, dangerous, unsatisfactory or slow. The places of those killed, too, are generally quickly filled again by new arrivals.

It is therefore suggested that full use should be made of the checks provided by Nature for the purpose, namely the owls. One of these birds has been known to kill as many as 30 rats in one night and to drive many others away. A nestling owl has been seen to swallow nine mice, one after the other, and in 3 hours time to be clamouring for more! Instead of being shot, owls should be bred and established in every park and large garden, among the rafters, in barns, mills and wherever else they are required. Nocturnal pests of all sorts, rodents, wireworm, etc., would then be uncommon. Owls do not eat eggs and only attack game birds when these stray at night.

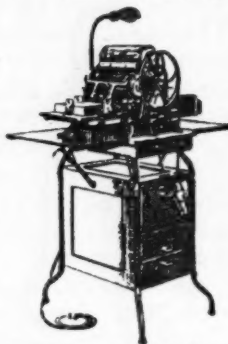
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